Mathijs Koenraadt

# Return to Freedom

A Traveler's Thoughts on Life, Love and the Fate of the World

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Cover image *Distant View of the Meadows at 's-Graveland* by Pieter Gerardus van Os, 1817

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"The only one who knows this ounce of words is just a token is he who has a ton to tell, but must remain unspoken."

— Louis Thomas Hardin

# Preface

Anyone can write a book like this. People are full of wisdom.

Earlier this year, through personal circumstances, I found myself with little income and ample time to evaluate the direction my life had taken. Breaking out of my comfort zone, I wanted to get away from how I had been living to see if I could learn something new. I decided to travel around Europe, passing through as many countries as possible by bus, train or boat, to paint myself a picture of what Europe's geography and its people look like.

To fund my trip, I sold most of my belongings, keeping only functional gear, a backpack, clothing, survival tools and cooking equipment, a light-weight hiker's tent, and a sleeping bag. To avoid distraction, I traded my smartphone for a dumbphone and left my computer behind in storage.

Snaking my way up from Athens, Greece, where I started, to my final destination Reykjavik, Iceland, I spent many long walks through various cities and diverse nature, thinking about what it really means to be a human being. I jotted down my thoughts in a notebook, which subsequently became this short book, filled with half-finished ideas, thoughts, and aphorisms.

## *Acknowledgments*

During my trip, I met many friendly people, both locals and fellow travelers. The experience of relating to so many positive-minded people changed some of the views I held of others, as well as my view of myself.

I want to thank everyone I have met along my way. I cannot list everyone here, but I wish to mention several people. I want to thank Eugenia from Tirana, Albania, for translating the unfolding events to me during an adventurous nightly bus ride to Skopje, Macedonia. I want to thank Oceane from Varna, Bulgaria, for suggesting a better title for this book, "with the word freedom in it, because it's about freedom." Stranded in Ungheni, Moldavia, I thankfully met four Russian-speaking women that helped me get a taxi to Iași, Romania, despite our inability to comprehend each other for lack of a common language. I want to thank Odilia, a medical student I met on the train to Cluj-Napoca, Romania, for sharing her insightful thoughts about the world with me. I wish to thank Monica, a woman I met on the shuttle to Budapest, Hungary, for letting me in on an adverse childhood experience, which meant a lot to me. Lastly, I want to thank my brother Martien for always being there for me when I needed someone to listen to me.

*Mathijs Koenraadt, Hong Kong, October 24th, 2015*

1

# The Meaning of Love

Life's unfair. An innocent traffic victim that ended up in a wheelchair may wonder each night, "Why me?" But perhaps life deals each the blows we can take because no one else could. Life chose us for a reason. At some point in their lives, those that took the biggest blows will learn they have become the strong, and that the world, while fearful of their resentment, seeks guidance in their love. Only the weak turned strong know what love means. We take the blows, so others don't have to.

–

Love is when two or more people communicate with one another they don't have to earn love, but that they deserve to be loved. When we know we deserve love not for what we do or how we look, but for who we are, this unconditional love immunizes us against the pain we incur even from a great setback.

–

Unconditional love changes how we perceive ourselves. Once we learn we are lovable simply for being human, we can face dark times with great confidence, because we know

we will resurface unscathed. Then we learn that nothing in this world can harm us.

–

A mother's love communicates her child its worth. The love of a father communicates his child its ability to live in the world. If the world hates you, but your mother loves you, her love shields you from danger and nothing will hurt you. If the world hates you, but your father loves you, his support helps you fight the world and win. When both your parents love you, then no matter what happens you will never lose your capacity for love. You will continue to pass your love on to the world because you don't know any better. By contrast, the unloved suffer greatly. When your mother hates you, you will hate the world for making her hate you. When your father hates you, you will blame yourself for disappointing him. When both your parents hate you, you will wish you were never born.

–

Whenever we feel unloved, we must learn to stand up for ourselves and say, "I deserve to be loved, because my life has value. The pain I feel is real. I don't need drugs or therapy. I need to be believed." Self-love means to embrace the belief the future will change for the better, and that you will be there when it does.

–

Abuse communicates the lie we are unlovable. It wants us to believe there is something innately wrong with us, and that

we must earn love through loyalty and obedience, making up for our faults, always asking others for permission to live our own lives. While we cannot force others to love us, we can learn to love ourselves. Self-love, not egotism, teaches us, despite our endless struggles with ourselves to the point of questioning our own humanity, we have the right to refuse to work for love. Healing self-doubt, we will come to see the pain we suffered was never our fault, but the fault of our abuser's incapacity for love.

–

Forgiveness denies self-love and blocks healing because by extending others forgiveness for their past abuse, we confirm in their eyes our negative self-worth. Thus, rather than winning the love we seek from them, forgiveness legitimizes our maltreatment and denies our pain, because we strengthen the abusers' false beliefs about us.

–

It is a misconception that we ought to let go of the past, i.e. to forget and pretend the past never happened. When we deny our past, we deny the life we have lived that made us who we are today. While we should not dwell on the past in such a repetitive manner that it stops us from growing as persons, we can only heal past pain when we consciously face the dark we hid inside us. Then we learn who we really are and why we have become this way. Accepting the truth about our existence, we can stop blaming ourselves.

–

The fight against something we hate weakens us, the battle for something we love strengthens us. The struggle for self-love never exhausts us.

–

Hate is sown in destructed children's souls.

2

# The Truth about Money and Wealth

Most people feel every day anew that they have to work more for less life. Working for money means to sell your productivity today for the promise, but not the guarantee, of future wealth. The promise of wealth preoccupies our minds as we slave away at artificial jobs, doing meaningless work. The prime-time lives of the rich and famous shame us into poverty, thinking we must be at fault for being poor, or that we are not good enough to deserve a better life. But money can never buy the things we really want. Money is a lie, a false prophet. The freedom we look for is not for sale. More than material wealth, we seek recognition, the kind of positive regard only loved ones can give us.

–

Money preoccupies us. We think of money as coins, paper, plastic, bits, bytes or bullion. Popular movies often propagate the money lie, sending leading casts off to chase some object of value—a suitcase full of money, some lost treasure, a valuable artifact, or a physical key that opens a door to greater riches. Modern society has become a money-oriented cult. But money distracts the human mind from more important things, like a carrot on a stick fools a donkey. We allow money to dictate our social pecking order because those that have

more of it supposedly have 'earned' their rank through talent and meritocratic effort, but that excuse obscures the inherited prior wealth that rules most of the world.

–

Money controls our behavior like an invisible stick threatens to beat us over the head if we don't submit to the conformity and obedience the money masters demand of us. On the other hand, those with prior wealth can mobilize entire armies of followers—a money-drugged masses, perfectly unaware of their own exploitation—while the manipulators carefully market their decisions as in "the people's best interest", or for matters of "national security". Meanwhile, they rob us blind.

–

Poverty is learned behavior. Parents born in poor environments can only teach their children to live within the same, narrowly confined lifestyles poorer environments can offer, like wild animals born in captivity. The poor must "know their place", crammed together like sardines in a tin can, while the rich can move around unrestricted.

–

The rich merely live in the world the poor built for them.

–

The wealthy can only stay wealthy through aggressive rejection of poorer lifestyles, which translates to the oppression of the poor.

–

Material wealth is the kind you pay for with your life.

–

The things society teaches us to value most—money, status, and power—are no more real than fairy dust. Know that you need to burn two Picasso's and a Matisse to boil one egg.

–

People chase careers like greyhounds chase a lure for the entertainment of others. Both lack the awareness to see the show. If either could see their exploitation, at once they would leap for their owners' throats.

–

The desire to have money measures a level of dissatisfaction with oneself. Since even the wealthiest on Earth seek recognition not for what they own, but for who they are, one must be of very poor means to want to become rich.

–

What we really mean when we say we want to become rich is to be able to call the friends we once had poor. We acquire wealth to insult others.

–

The moment we desire to own something, the thing possesses us back. The more material wealth we accumulate, the more we submit to the manipulations of people that despise us. The less we own, the freer we are. Only when we let go of the fear of not having enough, we learn that even he who possesses very little can have all the freedom and recognition he needs.

–

People see the value of their material possessions as a measure of their self-worth, but they delude themselves. Homeowners conflate the monetary valuation of their home with a measure for how well their lives are doing. When the value of their property rises, they experience a sense of confidence, of things going well, but when prices drop, they suddenly find their emotional well being at the mercy of events they do not control. In pursuit of happiness, we must therefore first learn to disconnect from what we own.

–

People that flaunt their wealth make it difficult for others to love them for who they are. Ostentatious wealth intimidates the very people that would have loved us even without. Likewise, we should be careful to offer someone a gift, for the confused recipient might show her gratitude to the gift, but not to the giver. Worse, gifts given as a substitute for the emotional affection people really need reduce the recipients to objects.

–

We find real wealth in emotional growth. While unforeseen disaster can burn material wealth to the ground in matters of minutes, no amount of setback can undo how we have grown as human beings. Personal growth is irreversible wealth.

–

Money has a fail-safe device, the law of diminishing returns. The more you work for money, the less you earn. The car that is twice as luxury costs ten times as much, not twice as much. The lives of billionaires may be twice as exciting as the lives of multimillionaires, but not ten times as exciting.

–

Money does not buy power. Real power stems from organized violence. You do not have real power unless you direct an army of will-less followers prepared to die for your command. In our globalized world, nations and peoples need military power to secure natural resources that provide for economic—and reproductive—success. These resources come in the form of energy, notably oil. Power is the control of energy. Despite their self-made riches, with few exceptions, even the most successful entrepreneurs and CEOs never come close to attaining real power, which is commonly inherited by birth. The rare possibility for a common man to seize power is to rally the people, an event which almost always happens out of resentment. Most of us will spend our entire lives working for powerful people without ever having power ourselves. To think that money can eventually buy us power is just a marketing scheme to keep us motivated to work.

–

The greatest wealth anyone can accumulate is a strong personality, the result of having overcome adversity against great odds. To develop a strong personality, we must first cultivate an awareness of our real needs and then assert those needs no matter what.

3

# The Motions of Life

The machinations of modern society make people go through the motions of life without really living. We get lost on roads others built, yet in life, we find our way when we stop following directions. Man was not born to submit to laws he had no say in making. Life is about reaching our destination with time left to enjoy it. Get to the place where you want to be first. Break free from the internalized chains of 'good citizenship'.

–

The so-called freedom of choice is not real freedom, but the illusion of freedom, because we can only choose from prefabricated options others make available to us. In our commercialized reality, rather than pursuing the life we want, we pick a career from a supplier's stock. We may freely choose the clothes we wear, the gadgets we buy, the places we go out and the city we move to, but the rules of society fill in every step in between. Choosing is the passive act of picking a new lifestyle. Real freedom means the freedom *from* choice when we take charge of our destinies and build the world we want to live in. This kind of freedom isn't called freedom, but self-determination.

Self-determination lies at the crossroads of where what the future brings meets what we decide to make of it. Once we quit playing the games others designed to make us lose, we become masters of our destinies. Taking charge of life, we referee the struggle between the world as it is and what we want it to be.

–

Stop preparing for life. Stop budgeting what friends, money or alignment of the stars you think you need to do life 'right'.

–

We often experience a lack of purpose in our lives, because we sheepishly expect others will provide us with one. We think life will show its purpose if we can only prove our worth through a series of slavish accomplishments we call 'careers'. But while we generally do not fear to have a purposeful life, we fear to ask for permission to pursue one, because we see everyone else waiting for permission too. This collective paralysis prevents us from seizing the life we want, while at the same time allowing priests and politicians to manipulate us with false promises. These snake-oil salesmen preach everything between the promise of eternal youth and the afterlife, none of which lie within their powers to provide. But we can have a purpose-driven life this very moment when we give ourselves permission to pursue it.

–

As long as you believe opportunity is a finite resource controlled by others, you will never be successful. Opportunity

is not something others can give you. So go out there and build your dreams. Stop waiting for another's permission.

–

Since one can only really learn from failure, the worst regret anyone can have in life is not having failed more often.

–

Those that climb and fall gain new potential.

–

We fake having lives by pretending to have careers. We go to work to escape life. Work has become an alcohol-, caffeine- and sugar-induced behavioral disorder. We have never worked more than at any other time in history, but the drugs make us forget what for.

–

People don't need more jobs. Some people already have three, just to make one living. What people really need is a life that comes with a reason to live for, a life of personal growth.

–

Modern society reduces people to pebbles pointlessly flowing down a river—no matter how much we compete with one another, all of us end up in a place below where we started.

–

Self-directed action remains completely alien to most people. Too many people possess no meaningful skills whatsoever, forcing them to act as vultures, circling around productive others, carefully waiting for them to produce valuable outputs and seize them as their own, behind their victims' backs. These people feign kindness, interest, and friendship, but only to get closer to the prize they have their eyes on. They have no original ideas of their own, and no sense of immediacy and determination needed to build them. They are human parasites, friendly-faced fascists that know they can never succeed in life unless they willfully exploit others. To them, success is something others own that they can only hope to appropriate for their survival.

–

Leadership mistakenly assumes the led cannot lead themselves.

–

If you are living the American Dream, you may be sleepwalking.

–

Live as you travel—light. The heavily invested attract unfortunate events.

–

Do not travel to mark things off your list. Travel to echo your thoughts with new surroundings and see if what is returned has received new meaning.

–

First, you grow up, then you grow strong, and if you hurry up, you can grow wise before you grow old.

–

Only slaves and soldiers speak when spoken to.

–

Whenever we find ourselves denied the right to speak, it's because we already live under oppression.

–

Longevity imposes a natural limit on freedom of speech. The knowledge that the offender will not live forever suffices to repay any perceived offense.

–

We win the debate when we leave others with something to argue about.

–

How much you helped others grow as human beings exceeds in importance anything you can achieve for yourself.

–

At night, most ordinary people relive the day and plan for the future, but they forget to dream.

–

Sometimes the right course of action demands us to punch life in the face. If life stabs you in the back, keep the knife. Return the favor when life turns its back on you.

–

As newborn babies, we rely on our parents' ability and willingness to provide for us. We're at their mercy. Children come into this world equipped with the skills to secure the shelter and safety they need for their survival. A baby's soft skin communicates it needs a gentle touch. Babies' cries signal hurt, danger, hunger or loneliness. Children have real needs and parents must find ways to meet them. In turn, children learn to reward their parents psychologically by mimicking their facial expressions, offering smiles and giggles. However, in adulthood, rather than waiting for society to provide for us, we must learn to get what we want from life through self-directed action, or forever stay 'good taxpayers'.

–

The freedom of one often comes at the expense of another.

–

As children, most men learned to manipulate their mothers into caring for them. The childhood experience leaves a permanent psychological impression in adulthood. It explains why adult men feel entitled to women's subservience. For women, it is more complicated. Girls more frequently wave their fathers goodbye when they leave to work, or hunt, even in feminist societies. Absent fathers thus leave their daughters with no one to manipulate other than the very person they will grow up identifying with psychologically—their mothers. Girls have a harder time getting what they want from their less available fathers than boys do from their more reliable mothers.

–

Getting what we want from our parents comes at a cost because as children our parents convinced us that we had to be 'good boys' and 'nice girls' to deserve their attention. We paid for our survival by forfeiting unconditional love.

–

Human beings deserve to be treated as such. Never abandon your humanity, even if the people you meet have abandoned theirs.

–

The freedom to act leads to natural inequality. Those that passively beg another to give them 'success' submit to those that create it.

–

We live free when we embrace the insight that we were born to assert ourselves and not to satisfy others' needs. This makes us neither egocentric nor narcissistic but liberates us from having to live under the yoke of those that exploit us.

–

Letting go of the need to control others, we win permission to live free ourselves because we learn that human beings are neither things to be owned nor forces to be controlled. A slave owner is as much a captive of his lifestyle as his property.

–

To master the world, master yourself.

–

Freedom measures our ability to pursue the opportunities we first imagined ourselves.

–

Nietzsche thought that what does not kill us makes us stronger, but he was wrong. The blows we take separate the strong from the weak.

4

# Embracing the Self

When we grow up believing many of the assumptions others hold of us, in every attempt to discover ourselves we risk not recognizing ourselves. To embrace the self, we must first return to it.

–

Travel changes the self. First, the traveler thinks of himself as the center of his world—*same me, different world*. As his travels continue, the world around him changes the traveler—*same world, different me*. The self is not a constant, but a force, and in order for it to grow stronger, we must absorb the world around us.

–

To greet someone while making brief eye contact communicates you have recognized the other as a fellow human being. The source of all human conflict lies in this failure to mutually recognize one another.

–

The greatest compliment to give a stranger is to speak his language because it means you've made some effort to see the world through his eyes.

–

Beware of accommodating others' needs, for your altruism may disguise a low self-worth. When we confuse another's misplaced sense of entitlement with our own misplaced sense of guilt, we risk losing ourselves. We can only be genuinely altruistic when we assert our own needs first.

–

We cannot truly respect others if we do not respect ourselves first. Mutual respect presupposes self-respect like two pillars carrying the same roof. Our ability to live in the world depends on whether we have the strength to assert our needs. Two people can never be genuine friends or lovers if either party fails to respect herself.

–

We pose the greatest threat to another person precisely when we want absolutely nothing from them because it makes them unimportant.

–

It is commendable to seek a mutual understanding with others, but we risk losing ourselves when we misunderstand our own needs. Never forget that you are still you, and you can never become the other.

–

If you feel disgusted for having treated others the same way you were once mistreated, it is only because you are still human.

–

All growth is struggle. The easy life is a stagnant life.

–

We find happiness at the crossroads of where how much we live for others balances how much we live for ourselves.

–

I am who I am, and cannot be who I cannot be.

–

Anyone that calls himself a wise man is an idiot, for if he is truly wise, then he should be humble to avoid crushing another's spirits.

–

You are what you do. If you act like a loser, you are one. However, acting like a winner will not make you a winner. To be a winner, you must stop acting. This kind of winning means to not lose yourself.

–

The most important thing to have that money cannot buy is your personality. People that adopt an image to pretend to have personality have none.

–

The beggar, the clown, the CEO... they each seek recognition not for what they accomplished, but for who they are.

–

The world demands us not to overestimate ourselves, for pride comes before destruction, but we equally fail in life when we overestimate the world. Whenever we reduce ourselves for fear of offending others, when we do not love ourselves enough to take risks, always asking life for permission, then we fail life and disappoint ourselves.

–

Sometimes we step into a stream not because we are brave, but because it stood in the way of more important things to do.

–

People gamble, because they yearn to be part of some abstract, winning in-crowd, yet every time they lose, this reminder that they are not winners crushes their spirits. Hence, gambling attracts those that doubt themselves most.

–

Only the weak know how to successfully exploit another's weakness because they know it so well.

–

Build your strength from within. It is the only strength you can exercise well enough to rely on.

–

Looking for weakness in others is time wasted not looking for strength in oneself. Hating others is time wasted not loving oneself.

–

He who looks down on others lowers himself. In every attempt to humiliate others, we dehumanize ourselves.

–

We prefer lies to the truth because knowing the truth makes us complicit. Lies carry no responsibility.

–

We learn to be self-reliant when we learn to ask for help.

–

We blame the sun for waking us up when we should have gone to bed earlier.

–

True heroism is an anonymous sacrifice.

–

The greatest threat to collectivism is an ordinary person that renounces his membership.

–

Alpha males have alpha mothers. The alpha male instinctively protects younger members of his tribe against overbearing or oppressive others, because he identifies with them. Such unconditional protection breeds natural loyalty.

–

A self-directed man does not have the kind of problems alcoholics drink to forget. He looks his past mistakes in the eye and asks, "What do you want from me?"

–

With the child lies humanity's greatest potential for both good and evil.

–

We should replace the word childish with foolish because childish men are fools, but children are not.

–

Parents commit the most unthinkable crime when they program their children to be someone other than who they are.

–

It can take thirty years to heal the damage done to a child in thirty seconds.

–

Boys beaten by their fathers become fascists, boys beaten by their mothers become successful fascists.

5

# The Search for Humanity

What do Nietzsche's Übermensch, the Hollywood Superman and socialism's New Man each have in common? Each philosophy assumes there is something inherently wrong with our humanity, and the proposed solutions require us to destruct ourselves in favor of some new, idealized humanity. Rather than looking for solutions within, we seek salvation in some externalized savior or fantasized Utopia. But there is nothing wrong with our humanity, only with our suppression of it. If we allow ourselves to feel more and think less, we can overcome the problems humankind faces. We can stop doubting ourselves and embrace our capacity for resilience.

–

The true meaning of the story of Jesus Christ is not that Christ died for our sins, but that if He were among us today, we would be the Romans killing Him.

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There is no such thing as universal humanity. There is only yours and mine, and what happens when we meet.

–

Life is not supposed to have some precooked meaning. There is no paint-by-numbers road to happiness, nor are we supposed to be happy all of the time. Instead, human beings came into this world with the capacity to face, fight and defeat adversity. But when we merely go through the motions of a consumerist lifestyle, never confronting real danger, hunger or physical threat, i.e. the five-star resort life, then we become chronically depressed. We were not born for the easy life. Our difficulty to achieve happiness lies in the lack of struggle. Without struggle, man is nothing. It is in the continued struggle against meaninglessness that we come to know our strength. Humankind is the force that stops the nothing from consuming all life.

–

Sports reduce athletes to pets—sit, run, jump, lie down, roll over... Well done.

–

We go to war when we are hungry, we make love when we are content, we dream when we are tired, we revolt when we feel wronged.

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Is the butterfly as aware of us as we are of it? To us, the butterfly signals the beginning of spring. To the butterfly, we are but moving tree stumps.

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Ask any human being about their rights and they will defend them as unalienable, God-given, etched in stone. But if we could ask horses to respect our rights, they would look up in stupefying surprise, then burst into hysterical whinny.

–

Traveling Eastern Europe, I came across many stray dogs. Walking along a trail leading through the Seih Sou Forest in Thessaloniki, Greece, one of them blocked my path. The narrow trail left no room for the both of us to pass at the same time. Under normal conditions, I would expect a confident dog to have run straight at me, but as we approached each other, this dog visibly succumbed to fear. Letting his ears hang down and backward, the dog lowered his head. It then walked half a circle around me, through high grass. I did not yet understand what had made this dog so shy.

Later, walking through the outskirts of the capital city of Tirana, Albania, I found a whole pack of dogs resting in the sun on concrete pavement. These dogs appeared even less confident. The look in their eyes betrayed a psychological humility, but I had not threatened them in any way. These dogs were careful not to bark or come close to humans. Staring one in the eye, I frightened it, and it ran off.

I eventually discovered what had happened to these dogs. Everywhere they went, their presence irritated the locals that had no time to attend to them, let alone feed them. Some of the locals habitually kicked small rocks at them to get rid of them. Conditioned by evolution to seek the companionship of humans, these dogs evidently suffered the greatest psychological rejection, perhaps to the point of doubting their self-worth—*Am I not lovable? Am I not good enough?*

In a sense, these dogs had been dehumanized. What we so selfishly call humanity may represent something broader, some underlying psyche all mammals share.

These dogs proved to me no one can love someone else without having been loved first. Our capacity for love, for caring and giving, depends on the unconditional positive regard we seek from our peers, and in the case of dogs, from humans too. Without it, we suffer from social exclusion.

This means that some animals may be more human than humans.

–

The question *What is the meaning of life?* is the wrong question. Life does not *have* a meaning, life *gives* meaning. It is life that asks us what our meaning is. Through our actions, we give meaning to the universe.

–

People shape their environment as much as their environment shapes them.

–

The purpose of life is to give meaning to the universe.

–

There's no high and low in terms of humanity. While that does not make us equal, it levels us. The only acceptable hierarchy dissolves itself immediately after its members secured a specific mutual benefit. Those that call on their place in such

a hierarchy as evidence of some perceived social status or worth—e.g. their royal 'highness'—deserve to live on their knees.

–

Friends don't take you for granted, they value you for who you are, and if you wish to keep them, neither should you take them for granted, but never mistake feigned friendship for real friendship. The latter makes you feel stronger, the former makes you feel as if you owe others more than you can give.

6

# Understanding Good and Evil

People are born neither good nor bad, but with a set of skills intended for their survival and reproduction in the world, they will live in. Since we can even misinterpret divine texts, environment and circumstance determine to a large extent how others regard our actions. Most people will behave 'good'—meaning, in concordance with the rules set by the society or community they grow up in—when said society either restricts its members' degrees of freedom or trains them as obedient serfs to psychologically internalize the rules of society. In other words, because society incurs an exponential cost to make people behave 'good', every society ended up only having the morality it can afford to enforce.

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Hindsight is the father of good and evil. One reason there is evil in the world is that people can't know in advance the short-term value of their actions, let alone their long-term outcomes.

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The thing most good and bad people have in common with one another is that neither is aware of their motives.

–

Good and evil are the same thing, human behavior.

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How can we be 'good' if being good means to deny half of who we are? It is better to live in full than to live under the yoke of another's morality. We can never hope to do good when the rules for what is good or evil are imposed on us by others. When we have no say over what our morality is, we are serfs.

–

To be a force of good in the world means to help others find permission within themselves to live the life they want to live.

–

On a Kelvin temperature scale, the absolute coldest temperature is set to zero. Therefore, this scale knows no negative temperatures. Putting our morals on such a 'Kelvin scale', zero indicating the absolute worst of atrocities a man can commit, we cease to measure human behavior in terms of good versus evil, but in terms of good getting better.

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Morals come from mutual benefit. If we agree not to kill each other, we both earn a good night's sleep.

–

The distinction between good and evil is a man-made distinction.

–

From an evolutionary perspective, 'good' means that which expands the population size of the in-group, or that which secures a population's long-term survival, while 'evil' means the opposite. Unsurprisingly, religious morals mostly apply to the faithful in-group, but not to the Infidel Others. Rights of Muslims, for example, apply to Christians as much as the needs of camels apply to horses, and vice versa. The forces of globalization, which have made the peoples of Earth economically dependent on one another, have not been completely successful. Rather than creating one single, universal human morality, globalization gave rise to a partially shared morality. But some peoples can more easily afford to live by this globalized morality than others, which offers these more independent peoples a competitive advantage.

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Life feeds off life. Morality is an inverse measure of one's willingness to live at another's expense.

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Sometimes we need evil to fight evil because evil hates itself more than it hates the good. Ridding ourselves of all evil, we would soon find ourselves at the mercy of a bigger evil.

–

We condemn evil men, but had we lived their lives they would have condemned us instead.

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Our survival instincts modulate our morality. In times of affluence and abundance, we make different decisions from times when we suffer extreme poverty or setback. Those taking the moral high ground can afford to do so, while those fighting for survival have little choice but to adopt a survivalist morality. In other words, we live by the morality we can afford. Living on the brink of starvation forces people to make decisions that those that can afford the high ground arrogantly despise. Most of us would say we are willing to die for our loved ones, but how many of us are also willing to kill for them? Some people find themselves in a position they can only shoot their way out of. Are they evil? Are they less human? They are just as you and I. Thus, the matter of life or death changes one's morality. This is where the phrase "necessary evil" comes from. We generally pursue 'good' as long as we can afford to do so, or to some point beyond which we can no longer sacrifice ourselves, short of committing suicide.

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A people that wish to survive the race of civilizations must be prepared to abandon the moral high ground and prove a willingness to fight in the trenches.

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Whenever we condemn others for being evil, we also condemn ourselves for being human.

7

# The Illusion of Progress

Equality comes at a price: we lose the freedom to be unequal. Only slaves can be perfectly equal to one another because they have no freedom at all. We are *being* equalized because our equality makes it easier for governments to control our behavior.

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Rather than guaranteeing equal opportunity, society shifted its moral focus towards equal incomes and outcomes, irrespective of risk. The risk-averse crowds have a 'right' to live the lives of successful risk takers, while society increasingly disincentives the risk-taking behavior economies thrive on.

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Equality forces us to conform to ideals we had no say in choosing, ideals imposed upon us by self-entitled elites that seek to maintain their own separation from the masses.

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The problem with demanding we treat everyone as equals is that many people—the victimized, the hated, the unloved—

are incapable of treating others equally because they were never treated equally themselves.

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The equality of men and women limits either's potential to the other's measure. Feminism failed women because if all a woman can hope to achieve in life is to mimic what successful men do, she will limit herself to what a man can achieve. The problem certainly is not that too few women want to be math professors or firemen, but that feminism failed to provide women with meaningful alternatives to the male hierarchies of science, politics, business, and religion. Rather than trying to fit women into male-oriented termite colonies, and to train women to live male lifestyles, women ought to break free from such constraints and pursue to build a world without hierarchies.

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The equality of men and women achieved two goals: it doubled the consumer market and halved the cost of labor.

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When governments, clergy or other ruling classes speak of 'equality' they really mean the equality of the masses. But by no means do they allude to an equality between the masses and the elites. These ruling elites think of themselves as a people of quality, destined to herd the people of quantity, looking after "public interests" and "national security", meanwhile robbing the populus blind.

–

The kind of progress politicians promise serves to ensure a people's loyalty only long enough to win another election.

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In our over-educated nations, managing classes disconnected from the people they supposedly represent put convoluted hierarchies in place to keep up the appearance of their importance, but they produce nothing of value. The feel obsolete. Out of their frustration comes a desire to forcefully submit the peoples of the world to their 'visionary' management, inventing complex laws, rules and codes that 'prove' we need them. Such oppression is a fertile breeding ground for a people's revolution.

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If Marx's philosophy was really about freedom, then why call it socialism? Socialist freedom is *managed* freedom, 'for your own good'. Socialism does not, cannot and will not elevate the working classes, because doing so makes socialism superfluous. To stay in power, socialists, therefore, reduce the people to lemmings that no longer have a say in the direction of their own lives.

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Social engineering, or the politics of human malleability, has proven to be as destructive to the human function as the totalitarian ideologies of the 20th century have been to the human form. Ideals are malleable, but people are not.

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Social thinkers ought to worry less about the gap between rich and poor, and more about the gap between social theory and social reality, for we seem to be needing increasingly more destructive wars to bridge it.

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Trust your farmers, love your artists, but shoot the bankers and hang your leaders.

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Politics is about powerful families competing for the right to exploit the masses. The 'leftists' wish to tell the people how to live, the 'rightists' wish to tell the people what to consume. Neither regime gives a damn about you.

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What politicians really think of the people: "Be quiet and hold still while we feed you society."

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If you feel confused over why politicians make deals with hostile nations remember that you have to be a hyena to fall in love with hyenas.

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Unlike Americans, who founded their own democracy, most Europeans fell for the smokescreen that their elites sold them as democracy. European democracies exist to hide elitist puppeteers from view. Nonetheless, both democratic ideals have now degraded into corporate oligarchies, the defunct democracies merely acting as fronts to fool the people into consumerist serfdom. Only a self-determined people willing to see the lie can break free.

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Foreign aid has become a religion. When wealthy Western aid workers visit Africa, the struggles of poor Africans overwhelm them, instilling some with a Messiah complex and the belief they alone can lead the starving to salvation. Armed with taxpayers' funds they established the only religion that literally breeds its own followers. At the same time, foreign aid can never really deliver salvation, for truly ending hunger in the world eliminates the need for foreign aid. The high priests of foreign aid, therefore, have no incentive to solve hunger, since their importance as human beings depends on the hungry going hungrier. Hence, they aggressively oppose cutting foreign aid budgets, a direct attack on their divinity.

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The true purpose of Western aid to the world is to keep others from developing the strength to aid themselves, like teaching a child how to ride a bicycle by riding its bicycle before its eyes.

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The causes of war have very little to do with caricatures of evil, supposedly acting out of hatred, but they have very much to do with responsible people taking up arms, so their children don't have to.

8

# Cities Are the End of People

"Cities are the end of people!" implored a Lithuanian woman in her twenties. She and her husband had returned to the Baltic countryside after spending a year struggling for a life in Paris. "We sometimes rented out a room in our apartment to tourists. The people that came to visit us were always excited about Paris, believing the city was very romantic. But we didn't think Paris was romantic at all. Where we lived, people pissed on the streets. Only rich people that can have anything they want really enjoy it, but the majority of us either accept to live in shit or leave. We left."

–

The great number of faces we encounter in major cities bombard our senses. Faces cease to be attached to human beings, but to living furniture. They become moving wallpaper at the edge of our world. Reduced to things, we come to see the defaced masses more as a target for exploitation than as an opportunity for genuine affection. In defense of our sanity, we retreat into smaller, manageable tribes of like-minded people, our social cliques. It is delusional to think cities promote social progress. Instead, cities promote a continued perversion of society.

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Rather than experiencing nature, we spend most of our time living within the confines of man-made structures. We've shut ourselves in. We breathe air-conditioned air, experience in-door climates, interact with factory-built objects and gaze at artificial horizons, the roads, and walls of our concrete prisons.

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Urban civilization not only allowed for bigger populations of people to live together, but they also made the lives we can live smaller. Compared to nomadic hunters and gatherers, modern people have voluntarily boxed themselves in, forgoing the freedom to roam free. Nowadays, mega-cities demand that citizens pacify their innate, wilder urges. We achieve this by submerging our brains in, for example, tobacco, alcohol, coffee, tea, chocolate, drugs, or sugar. Young people seeking to escape the concrete boundaries of their cities drown themselves in alcohol, making them forget how boring the night would have been without it. Cities promote virtual entertainment as substitutes to real life. We watch televised soap operas to compensate for a lack of relationships. Social media occupies our attention spans in single-minute intervals. Not human touch, but push notifications make us feel needed. Someday, we will desperately try to wake up from this urban nightmare and realize we are already awake.

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If the rules of hunters can be as straightforward as *to kill or be killed*, the mantra of city dwellers goes *to manipulate or be manipulated*.

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When passing through a city's financial district, we can already see what the cemeteries of the future will look like, each skyscraper aptly fitted with a staircase to heaven.

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Ancient Egyptians once built their great pyramids, but only to never build them again. We must accept the possibility that someday our insatiable urge to build skyscraper cities will also come to an end. Like pyramids, skyscraper cities will prove to be historical phenomena. Today, modern man questions the economic utility of pyramids. Future man will ask the same of skyscrapers. To us, pyramids serve as backdrops to operas and postcards. To future man, skyscraper cities may serve as prisons and cemeteries.

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Modern people are like potatoes, governments prefer high yielding varieties. We used to grow potatoes to feed more people. Now we breed more people to sell them potatoes. Cities farm humans, but our humanity is the manure.

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The centralization of labor in modern cities provides for growing urban populations, but at the same time cities rob

the common man of his productivity through taxes and levies, like farms rob its livestock of milk and body heat.

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Humankind has become a prisoner of its own success, for the ability to provide for billions of cohabiting people requires unquestioned obedience and conformity to rules too complex for anyone to understand.

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Elites successfully manipulated the masses into producing a far greater economic output than was necessary for the people's survival. The surplus wealth people generate almost exclusively benefits the richer lifestyles of their ruling classes. Whenever we hear news pundits exclaim the economy has grown by another so and so percent, what they really mean is the interest rate elites earned off their enslaved populations.

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While cities offer human beings many of the joys they seek, providing for real needs and beyond, they satisfy them in such artificial quantities the experience eventually numb the senses, forcing people to act in ever crazier ways to satisfy growing artificial needs. Clever entrepreneurs constantly seek to design such new needs.

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The concrete mazes of urban environments hold us captive. The streets we walk on restrict our movement, concrete walls

stop us from deviating from the path. People conditioned to living in cities develop a trench warfare mentality, along with its post-traumatic stress disorder.

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Cities cause narcissistic personality disorders because individuals lost in a sea of faces cling to their egos as rescue buoys. Too many people look just like you, act like you, talk like you. We invented commercialism to cater to urban narcissism, selling us tailored, 'original' identities.

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Besides commercialism, the politics of multiculturalism also answers to urban narcissism. For several reasons. First, multicultural societies help us escape the effaced masses by joining different cliques in which we can stand out, for example when Easterners move to the West, and vice versa. Second, when societies choose to absorb countless newcomers, immigrants, people can make themselves look special by associating themselves with the newcomers—*my friends look better than yours*. Third, even in saturated multicultural cities, such as for example New York or Amsterdam, the great diversity of people still increases our overall specialty, because we can form endless new, narrower cliques. In the end, each can be their own one-man minority.

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The once mighty spear throwers now command index fingers, clicking away at virtual worlds.

9

# Escape from Civilization

The moment we find the courage to charge through the walls we think keep us from living the life we want, we discover those walls are illusions.

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The perfect slave is not willing, but will-less.

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The meaning of history may be summarized as humankind's progressive self-delusion that her continued enslavement is freedom. With increasing deception, societies present its citizens' institutionalized slavery as career opportunities.

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The exploitation of other human beings comes at the expense of one's own humanity.

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With the birth of their child, parents lowest in a social pecking order receive their only opportunity to master another

human being. These parents crown themselves the absolute rulers of their child's world. Such dehumanized children take over their parents' role as the lowest servants in the hierarchy. They learn nothing but obedience and conformity because their social order leaves no room for freedom and autonomy.

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Society insulates us against ourselves, like a band of heavy drinkers blames abstainers for making them look like alcoholics.

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On a level playing field, the masses can easily compete their ruling classes out of their wealth and power. In defense of their interests, ruling classes have no choice but to play foul.

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Civilization is like an oyster's shell. The shell protects humankind but also shuts us off from the world around us.

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If society reduces women to objects, jobs reduce men to gears, and education reduces children to machines.

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Taxation is a form of social oppression. The most productive members of society end up being taxed the most because they represent the biggest threat to ruling elites, who either

pay no taxes or can afford to pay them. Ruling elites use selective taxation as a weapon to weaken competition.

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The collapse of the international banking system would expose the greatest fraud ever committed against the human race.

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The ideals of democracy died in the arms of politicians that re-purposed her to make their voters complicit to their own exploitation. At the end of every term, failed politicians can shift the responsibility for their crimes from themselves to their voters. This type of democracy only serves as an excuse.

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Friendly-faced fascists promise you everything you want to hear to make you give them what they want from you, but then silently fail to deliver their part of the deal. If you subsequently bring their lack of consistency to their attention, they will act offended and blame you for questioning their 'friendship'. Nowadays, friendly-faced fascists dominate corporate, political and public arenas. These manipulators may even take acting classes to look genuinely sincere, shocked, worried or baffled, but beware that all their feigned emotions come at your own expense. Calling them hyenas would be an insult to hyenas.

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Civilized society tends to disguise your institutionalized slavery as an act of altruism. Through meaningless jobs, your subservience supposedly helps you pay back your debt to society, but it is a debt society made sure you carried even before you were born.

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At the time, the phrase *Arbeit macht frei* was a sadistic lie, but if today we apply the phrase to the lives of corporate lemmings, it contains more truth than we like to admit.

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Every Friday and Saturday night, the greatest armies on Earth gather at their drinking holes. If one day they no longer find satisfaction in their self-destruction, they will destroy the world in under ten days.

10

# On Science and Religion

The *problem of evil* as expressed in Epicurus' paradox rests on two false assumptions. First, it assumes a benevolent God ought to find it desirable to root out evil. While rooting out evil makes sense from our human perspective, sometimes we need evil to fight evil because evil hates itself more. Secondly, the paradox assumes evil is a thing or a force deliberately put into the world rather than something born of the world. Despite the idea of mathematical infinity, the universe we live in has physical boundaries, thus it contains only limited resources. The interplay between limited resources and growing populations of lifeforms cause a 'tragedy of the commons', i.e. the point when we overuse the resources, ushering in potential systemic collapse. After having tried everything else—regulation, innovation, trade, and so on—the only real solution lies in a reduction of the number of actors vying for said resources, either through war, social exclusion, violence or otherwise. We call this competition 'evil', but it stems from the tragic nature of the universe itself. Evil, therefore, is not a problem, but a solution to a problem, namely the price we have to pay for our existence. Evil exists, so there can be good at all.

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Religions are like nation states. Over time, the most violent absorb the less violent.

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Since the poor possess nothing they can afford to lose, militant atheism can never replace religion, because religion is the only thing that keeps the poor alive. Take away the poor's beliefs and they will revolt against the world. One has to be of privileged means to be able to afford not to believe.

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Few philosophers understand the point of philosophy, namely to harden the soul to win the fights too costly to lose. Most philosophers prefer to drown themselves in wisdom.

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People that claim science killed philosophy have understood neither. Science measures *what* reality is, what it's made of, while philosophy questions *how real* reality is and *why* it is so. Science takes the human observer out of its equations, promoting the idea of a 'real' reality that could exist in, out of, and towards itself, irrespective of an observer. But science cannot measure reality's meaning. Philosophy, on the other hand, questions how our observations and interactions change the meaning of the world around us.

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Science is an anti-anthropocentric religion that worships the absence of human observers from its equations. Science's

God is the Theory of Everything, and like God, that theory is indemonstrable. Saying the universe was always *there* poses no less of a dilemma than saying God was always *there* before He created the universe.

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Science hinges on an indemonstrable assumption that measuring 'real' reality, the thing we measure without interference from a human observer measures anything real at all.

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Unlike a computer that writes data to disk, data which we can query to retrieve and replay historical events, the universe we live in does not appear to store a record of the past. That means the past is as undecided as the future.

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If we consider that our senses are as limited to our being human as those of ants to their being ants, we must conclude that knowing that the difference between humans and ants is insignificant from the perspective of the universe, our perception of reality is no more accurate than that of ants. The scientific instruments we can build with our hands are no more impressive than what tools ants can build.

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The truth is a lie.

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The truth is the one thing that remains true when everything else changes.

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Truth is like the center of a swarm of birds. To a member of the swarm, seemingly absolute; to an outsider, always moving.

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God, the universe and the nothingness—different names for the same thing, a canvas for us to paint meaning on.

11

# Rethinking Thinking

Education surrenders critical thought in favor of textbook truths. Rote learning blinds the mind.

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Much of what we call education involves learning a new jargon, a tool for excluding those not in the know, but also to close ourselves off from the world. The educated classes seek to distance themselves from the masses, but on artificial grounds, for if they spoke plainly most educated men and women would immediately expose their stupidity.

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Despite not knowing the meaning of the word philosophy, if you asked the uneducated what wisdom comes from love, they would tell you.

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Narrow-minded people differ very little from intellectuals.

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How do ruling classes control intelligent people? They trap the people's attention spans in 24-hour news cycles. News distracts us from seeing how the vastness of time flows through our present moment, already shaping the future within us, like limestone stalactites form stalagmites, eventually meeting in the middle.

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People without education aren't dumb, aren't kept dumb nor made dumb—they simply are not dumb, but instead, society treats them in a dumb way to make them do dumb work.

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Man invented rational thought to make sense of his irrational rules.

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Soon, the thing with the highest known IQ will be a machine. What does that say about people with high IQ's? It says they will soon think like machines.

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Nowadays, IQ tests measure a specific economic value, namely one's ability to rapidly alternate between complex, but narrowly defined problems, with the 'right' answer always being the most profitable answer—benefiting the corporation, not the people. IQ intelligence resembles the ability to work a mental assembly line. IQ scores inversely correlate with one's ability to concentrate and think deeply about important

matters. An extraordinarily high IQ may very well be a mental disorder.

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Having nobody left to learn from is the loneliest thing that can happen to intelligent people.

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In order to do the right thing, we must first have permission to do things wrong. This is called learning.

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What prevents people from thinking big? The fear of their own smallness.

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Books teach us how book authors think.

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To be an independent thinker, one must stop listening to people.

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Knowledge is a highly overrated phenomenon. One doesn't need to know everything to understand something. Creative thinkers discard most of what they learn as excess baggage,

savoring key truths and guiding principles. Meanwhile, they develop new ways of thinking about thinking.

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More than intelligence, in order to understand anything at all about the world, we need patience. Understanding comes to us on a snail's back.

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The fighters, not the thinkers, always win. It is far easier to win a fight than to wait for insight.

12

# How the World Works

Like chess, world order is not a game of strategy, but of paranoia.

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Civilizations operate on a spectrum of two extreme strategies. At one extreme, they seek to increase the total available wealth per individual. This we can call the capitalist or *wealth-first strategy*. At another extreme, civilizations seek to expand their population, meaning to produce as many births as possible per unit of available wealth, the socialist or *people-first strategy*. Although the two strategies are mutually exclusive, most civilizations pursue a certain balance between the two strategies, because their people are not homogeneous and individual families have some degree of freedom to choose a preferred strategy. Overall, the West leans towards the wealth-first strategy, while large parts of the world, including India, China, the Middle East and Africa, historically chose to follow the people-first strategy, maximizing their populations, as evidenced by their explosive population growth. These more populous regions of Earth consequently suffer greater poverty. To this poverty, there exists no effective solution unless these civilizations switch to a more prosperous strategy.

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Civilizations emerged from history as winning systems of large-scale human organization. Their internalized codes of conduct and their openly promoted and tabooed ways of life allow billions of people to live together in relative peace and harmony. But that harmony comes at the expense of individual freedom. Civilizations take charge of people's lives on three axes, either through physical control (e.g. slavery, compulsory employment), behavioral control (e.g. politics, law) and thought control (e.g. internalized social taboo, political correctness). Governments and ruling elites function to enforce each mode of control by threat of violence or social exclusion.

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In the West, especially in Germanic cultures, including much of the United States of America, people have become 'things' owned by others. Workers are gears, children are programmable robots, sexually attractive women are reduced to objects. These Westerners, reduced to things, through their wish to be a 'good' thing, e.g. a good worker, citizen or parent, have internalized a set of behavioral controls dictated by their culture. Compensating for their lack of other freedoms, Westerners escape to the freedom of the mind, creating art, literature and music, and other forms of expression.

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Life in the Middle East, in the Islamic-Arabic world, operates in an almost opposite way compared to life in the West. Islam's political doctrines preach how Muslims ought to be-

have as citizens. Specifically, a 'good' Muslim is expected to model his behavior to the one true Muslim, their prophet. Through their desire to live like their prophet, Muslims appear to adopt their example's mode of thinking, perhaps often wondering, "What would the prophet have done in this case?" Ruling classes help answer these questions and enforce them by religious fatwas and other amendments, accommodating for modern developments, such as whether or not pregnant women are allowed to drink wine. Unlike Westerners, Muslims are not 'things', they are free to own their own bodies. They are not gears in a machine. But since both their behaviors and their thoughts are molded into their prophet's example, Middle Eastern culture leaves little room for creating new art, music, literature, or perhaps even technological innovation.

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Neither Western nor Arabic civilization can be said to be superior or inferior to the other. Nonetheless, civilizations of equal value can produce highly unequal outcomes. While Westerners experience the illusion of freedom through free expression and choice, in order to become 'good' things they feel a relentless drive to perform creative and productive work, as if vying for the attention of a divine parent, seeking approval. But because Muslims can never be 'better' than their prophet, whose example they continuously seek to live by, they often lack an incentive for the type of creative innovation as seen in the West. In essence, Muslims do not want the freedom Westerners have. Different civilizations cater to mutually exclusive needs.

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The West has conquered the world twice. First through colonialism, and then by enslaving the world to consumer capitalism.

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Teamwork means working together in order to destroy other groups trying to do the same—this we call 'society'.

–

Public concerns often obscure deeper truths. For example, the American preoccupation with minority discrimination trivializes the success of the white middle class, reducing their economic success to white 'privilege'. In Europe, preoccupation with the alleged benefits of mass immigration obscures the fact that not even the combined European armies have enough firepower to withstand a foreign invasion.

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Capitalism and socialism are not opposing, but complementary forces. Together they maximize the population size. Socialism effaces the masses in preparation of mass consumption, in economies of scale, while capitalism increases a society's carrying capacity, giving birth to more people. Capitalism, therefore, is socialism's end. Socialism is capitalism's means.

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Governments' sole purpose is to fool people into believing that economies produce wealth, while instead, economies

produce new births to serve the wealthy. To hide this truth from the public, nation-states, rule of law, national media, psychoanalysis, or whatever system of abuse people are bred into, conspire together to fool the masses into believing otherwise. If the poor understood this, or if the middle classes that sense this truth acted upon it, a global revolution would be underway.

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In an economy four times as down, even the twice as competent child only looks half as good as his parent. Stop blaming your children for the world's lack of opportunity.

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A popular Western marketing slogan goes by the formula, "Here's your car, there's your road to freedom." But just over the horizon, the rent seekers will tax you for every mile driven. If nation states are vendors, the taxmen locked us in.

–

Many African Americans silently experience shame and guilt for having descended from slaves. They mistakenly assume there must be something wrong with them as if their ancestors had deserved slavery. A young child may wonder why white Americans didn't descend from slaves, but even the most progressive teachers forget to mention that white people too were once slaves. The Romans enslaved Northern Europeans, the Greek enslaved the Romans, Germanic tribes enslaved one another, and so on, and so forth. Only when Af-

rican Americans cease to see themselves as slave descendants can they free themselves from the chains of history.

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When illiterate people migrate to skill-based societies, their equality as human beings alone does not qualify them for any kind of job other than prostitution.

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Every man has the strength to go to war, but only the strongest can end them.

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Talented people spend their days solving problems. Untalented people spend their days perfecting how to manipulate others.

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The wisdom of crowds sends everyone off in the wrong direction. The people near the back think those near the front must know where they are going. The people near the front conclude they must be going in the right direction because those behind them are following them. Often the people we call leaders are those lonely souls trying to get away from the frenzied masses chasing them.

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Xenophobia is often not the cause, but the result of war. When societies fail to provide for its people, they find themselves oppressed by very the weight of their now unsupportable masses. Out of self-preservation, such a people projects its aggression outwards, blaming the Enemy Other, because sometimes war is the only alternative to collective suicide.

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The West conquered the world not out of hate, but out of self-hate. After Europeans had fought so many wars among themselves, their tremendous advances in military innovation gave them the unexpected edge to sail the whole world and submit everyone they met along their way.

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It's easy to condemn Germany for World War Two but had the Germans won, then many if not most Europeans would have celebrated victory along with them—the masses, hungry and fatigued, instinctively cheer for whichever winner will feed them.

13

# The Fate of the World

In the classical meaning, to stand on the shoulders of giants means to build upon the work influential others left behind. In a literal sense, it can also mean to stand on a pile of dead giants. But while the status quo dream of new horizons, the masses dream of new giants.

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Revolutions start when the governing illusions people invested in, such as empires, tribes or nation-states, have become too costly to maintain. The masses that individually invested relatively little will be the first to call for a new order, one they deem more beneficial to their security and survival. On the other hand, ruling elites too heavily invested in the old order have the least incentive to seek change. This leaves the masses with no other option than to overthrow their elites. In turn, the elites, hoping to defend their status quo, can only resort to severe oppression.

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Poverty is the gun, hunger is the finger on the trigger. Wars start whenever a well-fed people abruptly finds itself on the brink of hunger, whether as a consequence of political failure

or natural disaster. The about-to-starve differ from the starving, that cannot fight, and the well-fed, that don't want to fight. It is precisely those on the brink of starvation that will use the last energy stored in their bodies to fight for a cause that promises them the most glorious future. This is the time when dictators rise to power.

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The most common reason why people decide to go to war is so their children won't have to.

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Future historians will remember the Third World War as the 'First' because there will be no one left to remember what came before.

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What we call emancipation of women is really preparation for war, preparing women to keep the machinery at home running, freeing the men to go to war.

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Museums breathe the materialism of societies that can afford to put past cultures, peoples, and artistry on display. Even the past has become a thing to own.

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Man has populated the Earth to the point where further growth comes at his own expense.

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We live in a world of rights. We have the right to do whatever it takes to secure a future for our people. Failing that, we have the right to perish.

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City states will replace nation states. Already the large majority of Europeans live in cities. In case of global economic decline, cities vying for the same resources to feed their populations will find themselves at war with one another. Tragically, inter-city conflicts make urban populations highly effective targets for nuclear warfare.

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When Americans abolished slavery, they removed the chains and shackles, but they did not change the social conditions that make a man a slave. To the 'liberated' African American, his freed condition put the blame for his suffering onto himself, because born slaves can never really be freed, only discarded. African Americans were cut loose halfway through the process of human domestication. Robbed of their identity, they adopted American culture and completed their submission to the lie. With no other option available to them, the former slaves absorbed their former masters' culture, the internalized chains of their continued psychological slavery. Ultimately, African Americans will seek to destroy their former master's culture, just as the Visigoths burnt down Rome.

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America cannot be conquered, because her strength and security rely neither on her geography nor on what natural resources she possesses, but on her people's willingness to take from the world what they need. Even if the whole world conspired to invade America, its conquerors would end up owning a place too costly to maintain, because you have to be American to be able to afford America.

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The world does not need thinkers as much as it needs builders, because the builders can also think, but thinkers cannot build. The American niche that put idea men in charge of the world economy has a limited shelf life. One day, the idea men will find they have become obsolete.

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Americans never intended their multicultural society to solve discrimination, but to exploit its tensions for commercial profit.

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"Look at that new thing! I just have to have it!" sums up most of Western culture and all of what is wrong with it.

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Western thinkers generally reject Western superiority, yet they rigidly hold on to a belief in the universality of Western

social ideals of equality, democracy, and freedom. The paradox eludes them.

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Western capitalists have long understood that, after saturating their internal market, the only way to further increase sales is to expand the market. Africa and the Third World are that expansion. Like China briefly became the playground for the madness of Western architects, Africa has long been the breeding ground for Western consumerism, a stealthy continuation of colonialism.

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The West invented Third World hunger as an excuse to sell 'aid'.

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Long before developed societies 'emancipated' women and minorities, they first sought to exploit children and teenagers. Even today, high-functioning, twenty-year-old interns drive a large part of the economy, while thirty- and forty-year-old managers take credit. In the West, women and immigrant minorities effectively helped abolish child labor, shifting that burden to Third World populations.

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How much longer will it take before the single global internet breaks apart like the tower of Babel?

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Since the second half of the twentieth century, Africans suffered an involuntary population explosion brought about by money-hungry Western agriculturalists that forced their surplus production onto them. Although Westerners officially abolished colonialism and slavery, they force-fed the former colonies their commercial greed, especially by irresponsibly turning the African continent into a human factory for the sake of breeding new consumers for Western goods and services. Once Africans realize what is being done to them, they will outnumber the people of the West ten to one.

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The prospect of a third world war holds the attractive opportunity not to exterminate some race of people, but liars and cheaters of all races; not to exterminate people of this or that nationality, but sociopaths of all nationalities; not to persecute people of some religion, but bankers and politicians of all religions.

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As a consequence of mass immigration, Western nations have silently begun to transform into socially exclusive ones. While Western political leaders have publicly steered clear of traditional forms of discrimination, new technologies allow for much more refined and precision-targeted ways to discriminate unwanted others. To safeguard the wealthy lifestyles of Western elites, the very internet technologies that connect the world can be abused to exclude specific individuals from society. Electronic money systems that give birth

to cashless societies not only kill financial privacy but can also lock undesirables out of the system. Personalized public transport cards can stop specific people from moving freely in their own country. Virtual borders will replace physical borders.

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Europe is pregnant with the future, but the Union is not the father.

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The West has left behind a superior heritage. Of all places, migrants from all over the world choose to settle in the West. But when push comes to shove, will these immigrants risk their lives in defense of the place that welcomed them as equals? Will they stand shoulder to shoulder together with their hosts, against their own armies, and against their own families, even if they already proved not to be prepared to die for the place they fled? Perhaps the immigrants of today will indeed prove to be prepared to die for the West, but it will not be in the war defending their hosts, but in the war against them.

# About the Author

Mathijs Koenraadt grew up in The Netherlands, holds an M.Sc. degree in Management Studies from Wageningen University, The Netherlands, and has lived in Munich, New York City and Amsterdam.